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- Atty. Dkt. No. 74448/07215

6. The method of Claim 4, wherein corresponding intermediate reliability vectors of reliability values are generated in the step of iteratively processing for said plurality of intermediately generated code words.

7. The method of Claim 4, wherein the step of iteratively processing further comprises the step of subtracting soft input information from said difference of distance metrics to determine said corresponding reliability value for said one or more bit positions.

8. The method of Claim 1, wherein said difference of distance metrics in the step of determining is utilized to determine said reliability values for a number of bit positions which is less than the total number of bit positions of said final code word.

9. The method of Claim 1, wherein said difference of distance metrics in the step of determining is utilized to determine said reliability values for a number of bit positions which is one more than the minimum distance associated with a type of block code of said final code word.

10. The method of Claim 1, wherein the step of determining further comprises the step of subtracting soft input information from said difference of distance metrics to determine said corresponding reliability value for said one or more bit positions.

11. The method of Claim 1, wherein when said corresponding reliability value for select ones of said one or more bit positions are determined according to said difference of distance metrics in the step of determining, said corresponding reliability values for the remaining bits of said final code word of bits are approximated according to the step of approximating.

12. The method of Claim 1, wherein the step of processing is performed iteratively on a plurality of intermediately generated code words to arrive at said final code word, such that one of said plurality of intermediately generated code words is determined to have a minimum distance metric associated therewith, and which said
5 minimum distance metric defines said associated intermediately generated code word as said final code word.

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